

The National Academies of SCIENCES • ENGINEERING • MEDICINE

POLICY AND GLOBAL AFFAIRS DIVISION

Board on Higher Education and Workforce

SPEAKER BIOS (in alphabetical order) VIRTUAL TOWN HALL

The University of Texas at El Paso: A Flagship for Strengthening the STEM Workforce

Webcast Live Here: <https://www.nationalacademies.org/event/12-11-2020/the-university-of-texas-at-el-paso-town-hall-a-flagship-for-strengthening-the-stem-workforce>

December 11, 2020

Session 1 (11:00-12:30 pm ET) | Session II (3:30-5:00 pm ET)

Sarita E. Brown is founding President of *Excelencia* in Education, a national not for profit organization accelerating Latino success in higher education by linking data, practice and leadership to intentionally serve Latino students. She has worked for over three decades at prominent educational institutions and at the highest levels of government to implement effective strategies to raise academic achievement and opportunity for low-income and students of color. She started her career at The University of Texas at Austin by building a national model for minority success in graduate education and the next generation of faculty of color. Coming to the nation's capital to work for educational associations, Ms. Brown was appointed Executive Director of the White House Initiative for Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans under President Bill Clinton and U.S. Secretary of Education Richard Riley. Taking her skills and experience to the not-for-profit sector she launched the Hispanic Scholarship Fund Institute, and in 2004, co-founded *Excelencia* in Education in Washington, DC. A tireless advocate for educational equity, she currently serves on the Advisory Council Center for First-Generation Student Success, the National Academies of Science Engineering and Medicine Committee on Addressing Women of Color in Tech and the Advisory Board for the Impact Coalition for the Strada Education Network. Her contributions to higher education have been recognized by many including with the Medal of Service from Teachers College, Columbia University, the Harold G. McGraw Jr. Prize in Education for "innovative thinking, strong leadership and accomplishment by example", the Harry S. Truman Award from the American Association of Community Colleges, the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators and the American Association of University Women. She has received Honorary Doctorates from Carlos Albizu University, California State University, Channel Islands, North Carolina State University, and the University of Saint Joseph.

Lucía Durá, Ph.D., is Associate Professor of Rhetoric and Writing Studies in the English Department and Associate Dean of the Graduate School at The University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP). In her research, Dr. Durá focuses on understanding and leveraging community assets to solve complex problems. She uses participatory, constructivist methodologies to facilitate productive dialogues about risk and to design sustainable social and organizational change. To do this Dr. Durá collaborates with local and global organizations, and she is increasingly working within the sphere of higher education. She co-chairs the Hispanic Servingness Working Group at UTEP and contributes to leadership initiatives. She also represents UTEP at the Graduate Education Advisory Committee of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and is an advisory board member of the Texas Center for Legal Ethics. Dr. Durá finds teaching and mentoring students an especially gratifying aspect of her career, both in the context of everyday work and in seeing the impact UTEP alumni are having on the national landscape. She is committed to publishing with students and to teaching that foregrounds students' funds of knowledge and bilingual literacies. Her recent publications include a chapter on "Leveraging

assets through Appreciative Interviews in classrooms and communities” for an edited collection on high-impact practices in higher education, and a chapter titled, “Expanding the solution space: How asset-based inquiry can support advocacy in technical communication” for an edited collection on social justice and advocacy. Dr. Durá received her department’s Excellence in Teaching Award in 2017 and was a UTEP nominee for the UT System Regent’s Outstanding Teaching Award in 2016.

Lourdes E. Echegoyen, Ph.D., is the founding director of the Campus Office of Undergraduate Research Initiatives ([COURI](#)) at the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP). She is also a Research Associate Professor in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry. Chemistry. Dr. Echegoyen received B.S. and Ph.D. degrees in Chemistry from the University of Miami. She started her career as a high school teacher in Miami before returning to the University of Miami as a post-doctoral fellow and lecturer. In 2002 she joined the faculty in the Chemistry Department at Clemson University and took over the direction of their Summer Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU) program, which she successfully ran for two cycles of continuous NSF funding. That program involved strong recruiting of minorities (usually 50% or more) and an international component that enhanced the program with bi-directional global awareness. In 2008, she took a leave of absence from Clemson to develop and manage the American Chemical Society International REU Exchange Program (also with NSF funding), which exchanged a cohort of 35-45 US and European students every year to participate in summer research at multiple universities and research institutes across Western Europe and the U.S. Since her arrival at UTEP in 2010 and as part of her developing and growing COURI, Dr. Echegoyen has received several awards from the National Science Foundation (2), the National Institutes of Health (2), the Howard Hughes Medical Institute (1), and the Department of Energy (1), all of which are focused on student, faculty and institutional development. Multiple cross-institutional partnerships and collaborations have ensued from these awards. Her earlier publications were in the area of supramolecular and fullerene chemistry, while her most recent ones emphasize the impact that undergraduate research and related activities have on students, particularly those from minoritized groups.

Virginia M. Fraire, Ph.D., serves as associate provost at The University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP). She joined UTEP July 2019 and brings more than 20 years of professional experience in public higher education. As associate provost, she collaborates across disciplines to advance student success efforts focused on strengthening the entering student experience. This includes providing leadership to Developmental Math, Developmental English, UTEP Prep, Learning Communities, Peer Leader Program, and University 1301, a suite of 3-credit hour core curriculum courses. She also serves as the academic liaison to El Paso Community College to strengthen transfer academic pathways. Prior to joining UTEP, Dr. Fraire served in multiple leadership roles at Austin Community College (ACC), most recently as vice president of student affairs. In this role, she led student and academic support units across 11 comprehensive campuses serving 70,000 credit and non-credit students. Dr. Fraire’s commitment to serving a 21st century student demographic is most notable in her efforts to transform ACC’s student affairs to improve equitable outcomes. After leading large-scale innovations, student outcomes especially for underserve populations doubled. She is passionate about creating and fostering vibrant and more economically inclusive communities through higher education. A native of El Paso, Dr. Fraire grew up in public housing. She went on to complete her formal higher education at The University of Texas at Austin to include a bachelor’s and master’s degree in social work, and a doctorate in higher education leadership.

Ann Quiroz Gates, Ph.D., is the Vice Provost of Faculty Affairs at the University of Texas at El Paso. She holds the AT&T Distinguished Professorship and served as the Chair of the Computer Science Department (2005-2008 and 2012-2020) and Associate VP of Research and Sponsored Projects (2008-2012). Gates is the Executive Director of the Computing Alliance for Hispanic-Serving Institutions

(CAHSI), one of NSF's eight National INCLUDES Alliances that promote the importance of inclusion and equity in advancing innovation and discovery. She also directs the NSF-funded CyberShARE Center of Excellence that advances interdisciplinary education and research. Gates was a founding member of the NSF Advisory Committee for Cyberinfrastructure and served on the Board of Governors of IEEE-Computer Society 2004-2009. Gates was a member of the Naval Research Advisory Committee (2016-2018), AAAS Board appointed Committee on Opportunities in Science (2014-2017), and past member of the Computer Science Accreditation Board (2011-2013). Gates received the 2015 Great Minds in STEM's Education award, the CRA's 2015 A. Nico Habermann Award, the 2010 Anita Borg Institute Social Impact Award, and the 2009 Richard A. Tapia Achievement Award for Scientific Scholarship, Civic Science, and Diversifying Computing. She was named to Hispanic Business magazine's 100 Influential Hispanics in 2006 for her work on the Affinity Research Group model.

Azuri L. Gonzalez, M.A., is the Director of the Center for Community Engagement (CCE) at The University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP). She has been with the CCE and UTEP for 18 years and is responsible for promoting the universities' academic-based community engagement mission, and connecting and engaging students, faculty and staff with the community. She led UTEP's 2010 and 2020 Carnegie Community Engagement Classification. At UTEP, Azuri serves on the Provost's Community Engagement Council and Chairs the President's Advisory Committee on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. In her field, she serves on the Metropolitan Universities Journal Editorial board and on the Campus Compact Credentialing Board for Community Engagement Professionals. In the community, she is the President of the YWCA El Paso del Norte Foundation, and board member of the Executive Forum. Azuri also teaches in the Political Science Department and the Women's Studies Program on civic participation and leadership. She is the co-editor of the Community Engagement and High Impact Practices in Higher Education book (Nunez & Gonzalez, 2018). She is the Community Service Award recipient of 2019 from the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce's Hispanos Triunfadores program and one of the inaugural UT Board of Regents' Outstanding Employee Award recipients for her commitment to her role at UTEP. Azuri received her BA and MA in Political Science at UTEP and is a doctoral candidate in the Education Leadership and Administration Program also at UTEP.

Erika Mein, Ph.D., is Associate Dean of Undergraduate Studies and Educator Preparation in the College of Education at the University of Texas at El Paso, and Associate Professor in the Department of Teacher Education. She earned her B.A. in History from the University of Virginia and her Ph.D. in Reading/Writing/Literacy from the University of Pennsylvania. Her teaching and research interests include sociocultural approaches to learning and literacy, with a focus on the disciplinary literacies of bilingual college students. At UTEP, Dr. Mein currently serves as Principal Investigator on a 4-year NSF-funded project examining the academic and professional trajectories of Latinx undergraduate engineering and computer science students through degree completion and into the profession. She also serves as co-Principal Investigator on a 3-year project with US PREP/Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation focused on transforming UTEP's teacher preparation program. Her research has been published in journals such as Action in Teacher Education, Theory into Practice, and the Journal of Hispanic Higher Education. From 2018-2020, Dr. Mein served on the Executive Committee overseeing UTEP's 10-year student success plan, the UTEP Edge. In her role with the UTEP Edge, she collaborated on the design of UTEP's student success framework and has led workshops for students, staff, and faculty on asset-based approaches to foster student success.

Anne-Marie Núñez, Ph.D., is Professor of Educational Studies in the Higher Education and Student Affairs program at The Ohio State University. Before joining Ohio State, Dr. Núñez served nine years as a faculty member at the University of Texas San Antonio (UTSA), the second largest HSI on the U.S. mainland. Her award-winning scholarship employs sociological approaches to advance equitable postsecondary educational opportunities for historically underserved groups in higher education. Her

scholarship has focused on: (1) postsecondary trajectories of Latinx, first-generation, migrant, and English Learner students; (2) institutional diversity in the U.S., including the role of HSIs in promoting college opportunities; and (3) building inclusive and equitable environments in STEM disciplines and HSIs. Her research on HSIs, particularly that on accountability policies in shaping HSIs' capacities, and the creation of an HSI typology, has informed public policy and legislation. She co-edited *Hispanic-Serving Institutions: Advancing Research and Transformative Practice*, an International Latino Book Award winner that is the first book to focus on HSIs as organizations and their role in the American higher education system. She has served as a National Academy of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine Committee member, helping to co-author and disseminate a 2019 report on the contributions of Minority-Serving Institutions to the science workforce, entitled *Minority Serving Institutions: America's Underutilized Resource for Strengthening the STEM Workforce*. Her current research is funded by over \$10 million in grants from NSF to build equitable environments in geosciences and computing, raise Latinx attainment in STEM fields, and strengthen STEM capacity in HSIs. Among these projects, she works with UTEP's Computing Alliance of Hispanic-Serving Institutions (CAHSI) to explore how UTEP and its partner HSIs support Hispanic and underrepresented students to succeed in computing fields.

Roberto A. Osegueda, Ph.D., has served as the Vice President for Research since September 2005, with the primary responsibility of overseeing all research and sponsored project activities at the University. Dr. Osegueda has been a champion in making strides in building human and research capacity and creating an environment of growth for research. UTEP became a Carnegie R1 institution in February 2019. Dr. Osegueda has also been a contributor to UTEP's success creating an enhanced supportive climate for research, creative, and scholarly activities in all of the University's colleges. His office supports more than 350 members of the faculty and staff who seek extramural funding for their research and sponsored project endeavors. In addition, the VP of research has oversight of all University Research Centers. Dr. Osegueda has served the University of Texas at El Paso since September 1987 in various capacities as faculty, researcher and administrator. He was promoted to Full Professor in September 2003. In administrative roles, he has been Assistant and Associate Dean of Engineering, Acting Dean of Engineering, and Director of the FAST Center for Structural Integrity of Aerospace Systems. His research has been funded by numerous agencies, including the Air Force Office of Scientific Research, NASA, Ballistic Missile Defense Organization (now Missile Defense Agency), the John Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory, Raytheon, NIST, Air Force Research Labs, the Texas Department of Transportation and other agencies and Industrial partners. He received his higher education at Texas A&M University, graduating with the degrees of Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering in 1981, Master of Science in Civil Engineering in 1983 and the Ph.D. degree in 1987. He is a registered professional engineer in the State of Texas.

Louie Rodriguez, J.D., is Associate Vice President for Student Affairs at UTEP. As a member of the student affairs leadership team at UTEP, Louie's work focuses on assessment and strategic planning, cross-campus student success initiatives, and student and staff professional development. His portfolio includes oversight of the Career Center, Union Services, marketing, and divisional operations. Prior to UTEP, Louie served as head of diversity and inclusion for global law firm Proskauer Rose LLP, in New York City. He began his career as an attorney in the New York office of global law firm Paul, Hastings, Janofsky & Walker, where his practice focused on employment law and intellectual property. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Human Resource Management from Baylor University and a Juris Doctorate from Columbia Law School.

John Wiebe, Ph.D. has served as Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs at The University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) since March of 2020. Prior to his appointment to that position, he served the institution for 22 years in other roles, including administrative positions as Interim Provost, Vice Provost, Associate Provost, and President of the Faculty Senate. As Provost, Dr. Wiebe is the

University's chief academic officer and collaborates with deans, faculty, staff and senior administration across the campus to develop and promote UTEP's nationally recognized model for enhancing the excellence of its academic and research programs, while successfully offering access and affordability to a predominantly first-generation and historically underserved student population. He is responsible for the oversight and administration of all academic degree programs. As a member of the President's cabinet, Dr. Wiebe plays a key role in planning and policy development for the university, and strategic campus initiatives such as the UTEP Edge, a student success initiative that seeks to integrate high-impact practices with the goal of preparing students for leadership and success, both on campus and beyond. Dr. Wiebe received his Ph.D. in clinical health psychology from the University of Iowa and completed a clinical psychology doctoral internship at the University of Chicago Hospitals and Clinics. He also holds a master's degree in psychology from the University of Iowa and a bachelor's degree in psychology, summa cum laude, from Ohio Wesleyan University. A professor of psychology and licensed clinical psychologist, Dr. Wiebe has a history of teaching and funded research in psychometrics, behavioral medicine, and mental health.

Heather Wilson, Ph.D., the granddaughter of immigrants and the first person in her family to go to college, became the 11th President of The University of Texas at El Paso in 2019. Dr. Wilson graduated from the U.S. Air Force Academy in the third class to admit women. She is a Rhodes Scholar, and earned her master's and doctoral degrees from Oxford University in England. Before joining UTEP, Dr. Wilson served as the 24th Secretary of the United States Air Force and as a Member of Congress for ten years from New Mexico. She also served as the President of the South Dakota School of Mines & Technology. As UTEP's President, her steady leadership has guided the university and its 25,000 students and 3,000 faculty and staff forward -- increasing research proposal submission, improving retention rates, adding degree programs and developing a long term enrollment strategy -- during a global pandemic. The Chancellor of the University of Texas System, James B. Milliken recently commended her successful leadership through one of the most challenging times in history, noting her "grit and grace" has benefited the entire community. Active in community and national affairs, Dr. Wilson is a member of the National Science Board, which oversees the National Science Foundation. An instrument-rated private pilot and aircraft owner, she also chairs the Women in Aviation Advisory Board of the Federal Aviation Administration. Dr. Wilson and her husband, Jay Hone, have three adult children.